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COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Eighth session

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES
UNDER ARTICLE 44 OF THE CONVENTION

Concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Denmark

1. The Committee considered the initial report of Denmark (CRC/C/8/Add.8) at its 199th to 201st meetings (CRC/C/SR.199, 200, and 201), held on 19 and 20 January 1995 and adopted* the following concluding observations:

A. Introduction

2. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the State party for its report, which has been prepared in conformity with the Committee's guidelines, and for the submission by the Government of Denmark of written replies to its written list of issues. It notes with satisfaction that the supplementary information provided by the delegation and its involvement in matters related to the Convention made it possible to engage in a constructive dialogue with the State party.

B. Positive aspects

3. The Committee welcomes the measures taken by the Government of Denmark since the entry into force of the Convention in 1991 to promote and protect the rights of children. In this connection, the Committee welcomes the adoption of a law which makes it illegal to possess child pornography. It also welcomes the proposed amendment to the legislation relating to rules on joint custody, visitation rights and other related matters.

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* At the 208th meeting, held on 26 January 1995.

4. The Committee is encouraged to note the existence of the Government's Children's Committee and the Inter-ministerial Committee on Children which is composed of civil servants from 16 Ministries. The Committee welcomes the preparation in 1994 by the Children's Committee of an action plan to address the problems facing the weakest and most vulnerable groups of children in Denmark. It is further noted that this action plan contemplates the development of projects to address these issues through interdisciplinary cooperation within each municipality.

5. The Committee also expresses its appreciation that a government policy paper on "Human Rights and Democracy" prepared in June 1993, and of relevance to international development assistance, contained a chapter devoted to the problems facing children in developing countries.

6. Likewise, the Committee notes with appreciation the creation by the Government of Denmark of the Children's Council for an initial period of three years, which will, inter alia, reflect on and review the measures taken and the policies adopted to implement the provisions and principles of the Convention in the light of the changing situation of children.

7. The Committee also welcomes the appointment of a board for ethnic equality which has been established pursuant to Act No. 466 of 30 June 1993. The Committee is further encouraged by the proposals of the Government's City Committee to establish a system of social assistance and legal information for refugee and immigrant children.

C. Principal subjects of concern

8. The Committee notes with concern that the State party made a reservation to article 40 (2) (b) (v) of the Convention, but also notes that the Government may reconsider that reservation.

9. The Committee is concerned about the adequacy of measures taken to ensure that the principles and provisions of the Convention are widely known to children and adults alike.

10. The Committee is also concerned that certain provisions and principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, particularly those guaranteed in articles 3, 12, 13 and 15, have not been adequately reflected in national legislation and policy-making.

11. Concerning the right of a child to know his or her origins, the Committee notes a possible contradiction between this provision of the Convention and the policy of the State party with respect to artificial insemination.

12. The Committee expresses its concern at the high percentage of single parent families and notes the need for special programmes and services to provide the necessary care for children from such families.

13. The Committee is also concerned about the application of the law and policy concerning children seeking asylum, particularly with regard to methods

of interviewing children, including unaccompanied minors, and to ensuring that applications for the purpose of family reunification are dealt with in a positive, humane and expeditious manner.

14. The Committee notes that all children who have had their asylum requests rejected but who remain in the country have had their rights to health care and education provided de facto but not de jure. It is the view of the Committee that this situation is not fully compatible with the provisions and principles of articles 2 and 3 of the Convention.

15. The Committee also wishes to express its concern about the occurrence of the sexual exploitation of children and the problem of child labour.

D. Suggestions and recommendations

16. The Committee wishes to encourage the State party to consider the possibility of withdrawing its reservation to the Convention, and would like to be kept informed of developments on this matter.

17. The information contained in paragraphs 14 to 21 of the report appears to indicate that the Convention on the Rights of the Child has not yet been established as the framework for the work of the Children's Committee and the Inter-ministerial Committee on Children. Thus, the Committee would like to suggest that the State party consider according such status to the Convention with regard to the work of these two Committees.

18. The Committee also wishes to suggest that national mechanisms established to coordinate, evaluate and follow up the policies and measures taken to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child should work in close cooperation with local authorities and municipalities. In addition, the Committee wishes to encourage the Government of Denmark to consider strengthening its cooperation with non-governmental organizations involved in matters relating to the rights of the child.

19. In light of the provisions of articles 3 and 4 of the Convention, the Committee wishes to emphasize the importance of ensuring that resources are made available to the maximum extent possible for the implementation of the economic, social and cultural rights of children, especially for the most vulnerable groups of children. Monitoring mechanisms are essential in this area to ensure parity in all localities as regards the provision of services to children and the effects on children of any reductions in social expenditures, particularly during periods of economic recession. The Committee also suggests that the State party consider further strengthening international cooperation and assistance, particularly for the benefit of vulnerable groups such as disabled children and children needing special protection.

20. The Committee encourages the State party to consider the possibility of providing funding to the Children's Council to enable it to undertake independent studies on issues relating to children.

21. The Committee would like to suggest that various matters raised during the discussion might deserve further study, including the reasons for the

relatively high number of suicides among young people in Denmark and the development and use of social and other indicators to monitor the implementation of all the rights provided for in the Convention.

22. The Committee would like to encourage the State party to develop an ongoing and systematic approach to making the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known to children and adults alike. In addition, the Committee recommends that the principles and purposes of the Convention be made widely known in the main languages of the minority, refugee and immigrant groups living in Denmark.

23. In connection with the State party's ongoing efforts to create a greater awareness of the Convention, the Committee would also like to suggest that education about the principles and provisions of the Convention be systematically incorporated into retraining programmes and training curricula for various professional groups working with and for children such as teachers, social workers, law enforcement personnel and judges.

24. The Committee would like to emphasize that the general principles of the Convention, namely its articles 2, 3, 6, and 12, should be clearly reflected in legislation and policies. The Committee recommends to the State party that it consider the possibility of reviewing its legislation to ensure that the provisions and principles of the Convention, particularly those relating to its articles 3, 12, 13 and 15, are incorporated into national laws and procedures. In this connection, the Committee would like to suggest that further consideration be given to establishing mechanisms to ensure that children may express their views and have them taken into account in decision-making processes affecting them, including at school and within the community.

25. With regard to the implementation of article 2 of the Convention, the Committee suggests that further measures be taken to prevent and combat discrimination against vulnerable groups of children, including refugee and immigrant children and children infected by the HIV virus or suffering from AIDS.

26. The Committee recommends that further steps should be taken to strengthen awareness of the equal responsibilities of parents in child-rearing, in particular in the light of article 18 of the Convention. It is also suggested that the situation of single parents be further studied and that relevant programmes be established to meet their particular needs.

27. The Committee encourages the Government to take steps to monitor more closely the situation of foreign children placed in adoptive families in Denmark. In addition, it recommends that the State party consider the possibility of ratifying the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption.

28. The Committee would also like to suggest that further measures be taken effectively to put an end to violence against children, including in the home.

29. In view of the recent adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 49/184 proclaiming the United Nations Decade for Human Rights

Education, the Committee encourages the State party to consider using this opportunity to promote the incorporation of education about the Convention on the Rights of the Child in school curricula. The Committee would also like to suggest that measures to teach about children's and human rights could be used as a tool to advocate further the purposes of the European Youth Campaign, and the parallel Nordic campaign to combat racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance. It is also the view of the Committee that it is equally important that the teaching methods used in schools should reflect the spirit and philosophy of the Convention and the aims of education laid down in its article 29.

30. With regard to the situation of refugee children and children seeking asylum, the Committee suggests that the State party consider reviewing its Alien Act as regards its compatibility with the provisions and principles of the Convention, including that contained in its article 10 which stipulates that applications for family reunification should be dealt with in a positive, humane and expeditious manner. Similarly, with regard to the provision of health and education services to children in asylum-seeking situations, the Committee wishes to draw attention to the provisions of article 2 of the Convention which state, inter alia, that "States parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction".

31. The Committee suggests that the State party consider reviewing its juvenile justice system in order to ensure that proceedings against persons under 18 years of age are fully compatible with the provisions of article 40 of the Convention.

32. The Committee recommends that the State party undertake further measures to implement the provisions of articles 32, 34 and 39 of the Convention relating to the prevention and protection of children from economic and sexual exploitation and their rehabilitation and recovery. Specifically, with regard to the issue of child labour, the Committee encourages the Government to consider the possibility of ratifying ILO Convention No. 138 concerning minimum age for employment.

33. Finally, the Committee appreciates the willingness of the Government of Denmark to publish the initial report of Denmark, the summary records of the meetings of the Committee in which the report was examined and the concluding observations of the Committee on the report, and recommends that these documents be disseminated as widely as possible in Denmark.

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COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Eighth session

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 44 OF THE CONVENTION

Concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

1. The Committee considered the initial report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (CRC/C/11/Add.1) at its 204th, 205th and 206th meetings (CRC/C/SR.204-206), held on 24 and 25 January 1995, and adopted* the following concluding observations.

A. Introduction

2. The Committee appreciates the opportunity to engage in a constructive dialogue with the State party and welcomes the timely submission by the Government of the written responses to the Committee's list of issues (see CRC/C.7/WP.1). The Committee welcomes the additional oral information provided by the delegation of the State party which greatly assisted in clarifying many of the issues raised by the Committee. The additional oral information was particularly useful, in view of the Committee's observation that the initial report of the State party lacked sufficient information on the factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of various rights provided for in the Convention.

* At the 208th meeting, held on 26 January 1995.

B. Positive aspects

3. The Committee takes note of the adoption by the State party of a Children's Act applicable to England and Wales. The Committee also observes that the State party has extended the application of the Convention to many of its dependent territories. The Committee welcomes the intention of the State party to consider withdrawing the reservation it made to article 37 of the Convention as it relates to the procedures governing children's hearings in Scotland.

4. Moreover, the Committee welcomes the initiatives being taken by the State party to reduce the incidence of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and to combat the problem of bullying in school. In addition, the Committee is encouraged by the steps taken to address the issue of the sexual abuse of children, including through the development of the "Working Together" initiative which advocates and promotes an interdisciplinary approach to addressing this serious problem.

5. The Committee welcomes the information it received concerning the commitment of the Government to review its legislation in the area of the employment of children and to present new legislation in matters relating to the family, domestic violence and disability. Likewise, the Committee welcomes the measures being taken to pass further legislation in the area of adoption, including the intention of the Government to ratify the 1993 Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption. The Committee takes note of the Code of Practice for Children with Special Educational Needs which has statutory force and has been developed within the framework of the 1993 Education Act.

6. The Committee takes note of the Government's commitment to extend the provision of pre-school education. The Committee is equally appreciative of the recent initiative taken by the State party to require local authorities, in conjunction with health authorities and non-governmental organizations, to draw up Children's Service Plans.

C. Principal subjects of concern

7. The Committee is concerned about the broad nature of the reservations made to the Convention by the State party which raise concern as to their compatibility with the object and purpose of the Convention. In particular, the reservation relating to the application of the Nationality and Immigration Act does not appear to be compatible with the principles and provisions of the Convention, including those of its articles 2, 3, 9 and 10.

8. The Committee remains unclear about the extent to which an effective coordinating mechanism exists for the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is concerned whether sufficient consideration has been given to the establishment of mechanisms, including of an independent nature, to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the rights of the child.

9. With respect to article 4 of the Convention, the Committee is concerned about the adequacy of measures taken to ensure the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights to the maximum extent of available resources. It appears to the Committee that insufficient expenditure is allocated to the social sector both within the State party and within the context of international development aid; the Committee wonders whether sufficient consideration has been given to the enjoyment of fundamental rights by children belonging to the most vulnerable groups in society.

10. The Committee notes that the initial report of the State party contains little information on the difficulties experienced by children living in Northern Ireland and the effect on children of the operation of emergency legislation there. The Committee is concerned about the absence of effective safeguards to prevent the ill-treatment of children under the emergency legislation. In this connection, the Committee observes that under the same legislation it is possible to hold children as young as 10 for 7 days without charge. It is also noted that the emergency legislation which gives the police and the army the power to stop, question and search people on the street has led to complaints of children being badly treated. The Committee is concerned about this situation which may lead to a lack of confidence in the system of investigation and action on such complaints.

11. The Committee is concerned about the apparent insufficiency of measures taken to ensure the implementation of the general principles of the Convention, namely the provisions of its articles 2, 3, 6 and 12. In this connection, the Committee observes in particular that the principle of the best interests of the child appears not to be reflected in legislation in such areas as health, education and social security which have a bearing on the respect for the rights of the child.

12. With regard to article 2 of the Convention relating to non-discrimination, the Committee expresses its concern at the insufficient measures undertaken to ensure its implementation. In particular, it is concerned about the possible adverse effects on children of the restrictions applied to unmarried fathers in transmitting citizenship to their children, in contradiction of the provisions of articles 7 and 8 of the Convention. In addition, the Committee is concerned that children of certain ethnic minorities appear to be more likely to be placed in care.

13. Furthermore, in the light of article 6 of the Convention, the Committee expresses its concern at the health status of children of different socio-economic groups and those belonging to ethnic minorities.

14. In relation to the implementation of article 12, the Committee is concerned that insufficient attention has been given to the right of the child to express his/her opinion, including in cases where parents in England and Wales have the possibility of withdrawing their children from parts of the sex education programmes in schools. In this as in other decisions, including exclusion from school, the child is not systematically invited to express his/her opinion and those opinions may not be given due weight, as required under article 12 of the Convention.

15. The Committee notes with concern the increasing number of children living in poverty. The Committee is aware that the phenomenon of children begging and sleeping on the streets has become more visible. The Committee is concerned that the changed regulations regarding benefit entitlements to young people may have contributed to the increase in the number of young homeless people. The rate of divorce and the number of single-parent families and teenage pregnancies in the State party are noted with concern. These phenomena raise a number of issues, including as regards the adequacy of benefit allowances and the availability and effectiveness of family education.

16. The Committee is disturbed about the reports it has received on the physical and sexual abuse of children. In this connection, the Committee is worried about the national legal provisions dealing with reasonable chastisement within the family. The imprecise nature of the expression of reasonable chastisement as contained in these legal provisions may pave the way for it to be interpreted in a subjective and arbitrary manner. Thus, the Committee is concerned that legislative and other measures relating to the physical integrity of children do not appear to be compatible with the provisions and principles of the Convention, including those of its articles 3, 19 and 37. The Committee is equally concerned that privately funded and managed schools are still permitted to administer corporal punishment to children in attendance there which does not appear to be compatible with the provisions of the Convention, including those of its article 28, paragraph 2.

17. The administration of the juvenile justice system in the State party is a matter of general concern to the Committee. The low age of criminal responsibility and the national legislation relating to the administration of juvenile justice seem not to be compatible with the provisions of the Convention, namely articles 37 and 40.

18. The Committee remains concerned about certain of the provisions of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. The Committee notes that its provisions provide, inter alia, for the possibility of applying "secure training orders" on children aged 12 to 14 in England and Wales. The Committee is concerned about the compatibility of the application of such secure training orders on young children with the principles and provisions of the Convention in relation to the administration of juvenile justice, particularly its articles 3, 37, 39 and 40. In particular, the Committee is concerned that the ethos of the guidelines for the administration and establishment of Secure Training Centres in England and Wales and the Training Schools in Northern Ireland appears to lay emphasis on imprisonment and punishment.

19. The Committee is equally concerned that children placed in care under the social welfare system may be held in Training Schools in Northern Ireland and may be placed in the future in Secure Training Centres in England and Wales.

20. The Committee is also concerned that The Criminal Evidence (N.I.) Order 1988 appears to be incompatible with article 40 of the Convention, in particular with the right to presumption of innocence and the right not to be compelled to give testimony or confess guilt. It is noted that silence in

response to police questioning can be used to support a finding of guilt against a child over 10 years of age in Northern Ireland. Silence at trial can be similarly used against children over 14 years of age.

21. The situation of Gypsy and Traveller children is a matter of concern to the Committee, especially with regard to their access to basic services and the provision of caravan sites.

D. Suggestions and recommendations

22. The Committee wishes to encourage the State party to consider reviewing its reservations to the Convention with a view to withdrawing them, particularly in light of the agreements made in this regard at the World Conference on Human Rights and incorporated in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.

23 The Committee would like to suggest that the State party consider establishing a national mechanism for the purpose of coordinating the implementation of the Convention, including between governmental departments and between central and local governmental authorities. Furthermore, the Committee suggests that the State party establish a permanent mechanism for the monitoring of the Children's Act and the Convention on the Rights of the Child throughout the United Kingdom. It is further suggested that ways and means be established to facilitate regular and closer cooperation between the Government and the non-governmental community, particularly with those non-governmental organizations closely involved in monitoring the respect for the rights of the child in the State party.

24. With regard to the implementation of article 4 of the Convention, the Committee would like to suggest that the general principles of the Convention, particularly the provisions of its article 3, relating to the best interests of the child, should guide the determination of policy-making at both the central and local levels of government. This approach is of relevance to decisions taken about the allocation of resources to the social sector at the central and local governmental levels, including with regard to the allocation of benefits to children who have completed compulsory schooling and have no full-time employment. The Committee notes the importance of additional efforts to overcome the problems of growing social and economic inequality and increased poverty.

25. With regard to matters relating to the health, welfare and standard of living of children in the United Kingdom, the Committee recommends additional measures to address, as a matter of priority, problems affecting the health status of children of different socio-economic groups and of children belonging to ethnic minorities and to the problems of homelessness affecting children and their families.

26. The Committee recommends that in line with the provisions of article 42 of the Convention, the State party should undertake measures to make the provisions and principles of the Convention widely known to adults and children alike. It is also suggested that teaching about children's rights

should be incorporated into the training curricula of professionals working with or for children, such as teachers, the police, judges, social workers, health workers and personnel in care and detention institutions.

27. The Committee would like to suggest that greater priority be given to incorporating the general principles of the Convention, especially the provisions of its article 3, relating to the best interests of the child, and article 12, concerning the child's right to make their views known and to have these views given due weight, in the legislative and administrative measures and in policies undertaken to implement the rights of the child. It is suggested that the State party consider the possibility of establishing further mechanisms to facilitate the participation of children in decisions affecting them, including within the family and the community.

28. The Committee recommends that race relations legislation be introduced in Northern Ireland as a matter of urgency and is encouraged by the information presented by the delegation of the State party regarding the Government's intention to follow up on this matter.

29. The Committee would also like to suggest that a review be undertaken of the nationality and immigration laws and procedures to ensure their conformity with the principles and provisions of the Convention.

30. The Committee recommends that further measures be undertaken to educate parents about their responsibilities towards their children, including through the provision of family education which should emphasize the equal responsibilities of both parents. While recognizing that the Government views the problem of teenage pregnancies as a serious one, the Committee suggests that additional efforts, in the form of prevention-oriented programmes which could be part of an educational campaign, are required to reduce the number of teenage pregnancies.

31. The Committee is also of the opinion that additional efforts are required to overcome the problem of violence in society. The Committee recommends that physical punishment of children in families be prohibited in the light of the provisions set out in articles 3 and 19 of the Convention. In connection with the child's right to physical integrity, as recognized by the Convention, namely in its articles 19, 28, 29 and 37, and in the light of the best interests of the child, the Committee suggests that the State party consider the possibility of undertaking additional education campaigns. Such measures would help to change societal attitudes towards the use of physical punishment in the family and foster the acceptance of the legal prohibition of the physical punishment of children.

32. With regard to matters relating to education, the Committee suggests that children's right to appeal against expulsion from school be effectively ensured. It is also suggested that procedures be introduced to ensure that children are provided with the opportunity to express their views on the running of the schools in matters of concern to them. Further, the Committee recommends that the training curricula of teachers should incorporate education about the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is recommended that teaching methods should be inspired by and reflect the spirit and philosophy of the Convention, in the light of the general principles of the

Convention and the provisions of its article 29. The Committee would also like to suggest that the State party consider the possibility of introducing education about the Convention on the Rights of the Child into school curricula. Legislative measures are recommended to prohibit the use of corporal punishment in privately funded and managed schools.

33. The Committee also suggests that the State party provide further support to the teaching of the Irish language in schools in Northern Ireland and to integrated education schooling.

34. The Committee recommends that the emergency and other legislation, including in relation to the system of administration of juvenile justice, at present in operation in Northern Ireland should be reviewed to ensure its consistency with the principles and provisions of the Convention.

35. The Committee recommends that law reform be pursued in order to ensure that the system of the administration of juvenile justice is child-oriented. The Committee also wishes to recommend that the State party take the necessary measures to prevent juvenile delinquency as set down in the Convention and complemented by the Riyadh Guidelines.

36. More specifically, the Committee recommends that serious consideration be given to raising the age of criminal responsibility throughout the areas of the United Kingdom. The Committee also recommends the introduction of careful monitoring of the new Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 with a view to ensuring full respect for the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In particular, the provisions of the Act which allow for, inter alia, placement of secure training orders on children aged between 12 and 14, indeterminate detention, and the doubling of sentences which may be imposed on 15- to 17-year-old children should be reviewed with respect to their compatibility with the principles and provisions of the Convention.

37. Within the context of the law reform being considered with regard to matters relating to the employment of children, the Committee expresses the hope that the State party will consider reviewing its reservation with a view to its withdrawal. Similarly, the Committee expresses the hope that the Government may consider the possibility of becoming a party to ILO Convention No. 138.

38. The issues of sexual exploitation and drug abuse as they affect children should also be addressed on an urgent basis, including with regard to the undertaking of further measures to prevent them.

39. The Committee is of the view that the implementation of the provisions of article 39 of the Convention deserves greater attention. Programmes and strategies should be developed to ensure that measures are in place to promote the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of, inter alia, neglect, sexual exploitation, abuse, family conflict, violence, drug abuse, as well as of children in the system of administration of justice. Such measures should be applied within the national context but also within the framework of international cooperation.

40. In addition, the Committee recommends pro-active measures for the rights of children belonging to Gypsy and Traveller communities, including their right to education, and that a sufficient number of adequately appointed caravan sites for these communities be secured.

41. The Committee also recommends that information on the implementation of the Convention in the dependent territory of Hong Kong be submitted to the Committee by 1996.

42. The Committee encourages the State party to disseminate widely the State party report, summary records of the discussion of the report within the Committee and the concluding observations adopted by the Committee following its consideration of the report. The Committee would like to suggest that these documents be brought to the attention of Parliament and that the suggestions and recommendations for action contained therein be followed up. In this regard, the Committee suggests that closer cooperation with non-governmental organizations be pursued.

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Eighth session

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES
UNDER ARTICLE 44 OF THE CONVENTION

Concluding observations of the Committee
on the Rights of the Child: Argentina

1. The Committee considered at its seventh session the initial report of Argentina (CRC/C/8/Add.2) at its 177th to 179th meetings (CRC/C/SR.177, 178 and 179), held on 10 and 11 October 1994. In view of the fact that the additional report which had been requested from the Government of Argentina to supplement the information contained in Argentina's initial report was received just before the consideration of the report, the Committee decided to postpone the adoption of its concluding observations until its next session. The Committee therefore adopted* at its eighth session the following concluding observations:

A. Introduction

2. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the State party for engaging in a dialogue with the Committee. The Committee notes with regret that the report submitted by the Government of Argentina does not cover all rights enshrined in the Convention and that it was not prepared in accordance with

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* At the 208th meeting, held on 26 January 1995.

the Committee's guidelines for the preparation of initial reports. It notes that the report mainly deals with the legal framework and does not contain sufficient information, either analytical or statistical, on the actual implementation of the principles and rights set forth in the Convention. The extensive additional information submitted by the Government came too late for the Committee members to study and examine before the discussion with the State party delegation.

B. Positive aspects

3. The Committee notes with satisfaction the declaration made by the State party upon ratification in regard to article 38 that a prohibition exists in national legislation on the use of children under 18 in armed conflicts.

4. The Committee also welcomes the establishment of the National Council for Children and Family, the development of a National Plan of Action for Children as well as the signing of a federal Pact for Mothers and Children.

5. The Committee welcomes the efforts undertaken by the Government of the State party to publicize the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

6. The Committee welcomes the incorporation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as other human rights treaties ratified by Argentina, into the domestic legal system and the high legal status attributed to them by virtue of which they are given precedence over national laws.

7. The Committee notes with satisfaction the successful immunization programme with 99 per cent coverage and the high literacy rate - 95 per cent in 1990.

C. Principal subjects of concern

8. The Committee is furthermore concerned about the reservations entered by the Government of Argentina upon the ratification of the Convention with respect to article 21(b), (c), (d), (e), due to their broad nature.

9. The Committee is concerned that sufficient administrative and other measures seem not to have been taken to facilitate an effective coordination of the implementation of the Convention on local, regional and national levels.

10. The Committee takes note of the disparity of marriage ages for boys and girls in Argentine law, which seems to be contrary to the provisions of article 2 of the Convention.

11. The Committee notes with special concern the situation of children from vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, such as disabled children, abandoned children and children living and/or working in the streets as well as children belonging to households living in poverty.

12. The Committee is also worried about the high number of single mothers in Argentina between the ages of 12 and 18 and about reports on the occurrence of domestic violence and sexual abuse.

13. The Committee notes the problems in the schools, with high turnover of teachers and children dropping out.

E. Suggestions and recommendations

14. The Committee recommends that the Government of Argentina consider reviewing the reservation entered upon ratification of the Convention with a view to withdrawing it. In that connection, the attention of the State party is drawn to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights in June 1993 which encouraged States to withdraw reservations to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

15. The Committee recommends that, given the federal nature of the Argentine State, a comprehensive approach be taken by the Government in implementing the Convention, particularly in assuring better coordination between the various mechanisms and institutions already in place to deal with the promotion and protection of the rights of children. Of importance, in that context, would be the establishment of an appropriate infrastructure at all levels and increased coordination between efforts undertaken at the local and provincial level with those taken at the national level. It is recommended that emphasis also be put on the aspect of monitoring, including through an ombudsman, and on cooperation with non-governmental organizations working for the rights of the child.

16. The Committee suggests that the budgetary measures be reviewed with a view to ensuring that the maximum amount of available resources is allocated to promote and protect the rights of the child at the federal, regional and local levels.

17. The Committee recommends that further efforts be made to ensure that personnel dealing with children be provided with adequate training which emphasizes the principles and norms in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

18. The Committee suggests that a larger part of the education and training of law enforcement personnel, judges and other administration of justice officials be devoted to an understanding of international standards on juvenile justice. The Committee also recommends that juvenile courts be set up in all provinces.

19. The Committee suggests that the State party consider undertaking greater efforts to provide family education and developing awareness of the equal responsibility of parents. Health education programmes should be developed to counter the high incidence of teenage pregnancy.

20. The Committee suggests that the State party considers the possibility of introducing more effective legislation and follow-up mechanisms to prevent violence within the family in the spirit of article 19.

21. The Committee also recommends that further measures be taken by the Government to reduce drop-out rates in schools and to ensure that the schools are adequately staffed with qualified personnel. It is also recommended that further steps be taken to encourage the active participation of children in the schools, as well as outside, in the spirit of article 12 of the Convention.

22. The Committee also recommends that the report and the additional information submitted by the State party, the summary records of its consideration and the concluding observations of the Committee be disseminated as widely as possible within the country.